discussions with representatives of Apex Industry Chambers/Associations under the chairmanship of Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister. The following points emerged during discussions:

(i) Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) and PHD Chambers of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) have evolved a Code of Conduct of Affirmative Action. Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) has also agreed to soon evolve a similar plan of action.

(ii) Industry Associations are willing to intensify their efforts in developing the skill sets and developing entrepreneurial abilities amongst SC/ST persons.

(iii) There was a general agreement on positive discrimination in employment in favour of SC/ST persons *i.e.* other things being equal SC/ST persons will be given prefenence.

(iv) Industry Chambers are agreeable to reporting of data on SC/ST employment on voluntary basis.

(v) Ombudsman will be appointed by Industry Associations to monitor the compliance with the voluntary Code of Conduct.

Employment for disabled in private sector

*246. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to provide incentives to private sector, to employ physically challenged persons:

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the private sector thereto?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. A scheme sanctioned by the Government envisages payment of employer's contribution to Employees Provident Fund (EPF) and Employees State Insurance (ESI) for the first three years for providing employment to persons with disabilities. The benefit of the scheme is for the persons with monthly wages up to Rs. 25,000/- per month. The scheme covers all persons with disabilities defined under the Persons with Disabilities Act and National Trust Act.

As the scheme has been sanctioned recently, the reaction of the employers in the Private Sector is still not known.

Adoption of orphan children

†*248. SHRI AJAY MAROO:
SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the existing provisions regarding adoption of orphan children;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether it is a fact that difficulty is being faced in adopting such children due to legal complexities;

(c) whether there is any proposal to reconsider the laws regarding adoption; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Sikhs can adopt under the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1856. The Guardianship and Wards Act, 1890 is used for foreign prospective adoptive parents in the case of inter-country adoptions and non-Hindus in the case of domestic adoptions. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Act, 2006 also provides for the adoption of orphan, abandoned and surrendered children. As per Section 41 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Act, 2006 there is no restriction in adoption on account of sex, religion or caste of the child or prospective parents. Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA)—an autonomous body under this Ministry, has issued Guidelines for laying down the procedure for adoption. These Guidelines are reviewed from time to time to make the process of adoption simpler and faster.

(b) and (c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Running of orphanages

†*249. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that both registered and unregistered organizations are running orphanages;

(b) whether certain cases of supplying children for sexual exploitation by the people running these orphanages have come to the notice of Government; and

(c) if so, the measures being taken by Government to prevent such incidents and for the safety of children?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) The orphanages are set up and run by the State Governments by themselves or in association with voluntary organizations. The supervision, control and monitoring of orphanages are the responsibility of the respective State Government/UT Administrations. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 and its Amendment Act, 2006 provide for regulation, monitoring, care, protection and treatment of children in need of care and protection as well as children in conflict with law. The Ministry of Women and Child Development maintains information pertaining only to those orphanages which are run by adoption agencies and recognized by the Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA). Details are available on CARA's website—*www.adoptionindia.nic.in.*

(b) No incidence has come to the notice of the Ministry regarding supply of children for sexual exploitation.

(c) Does not arise.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.